

Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

WILSON, LARRY DAVID. 1975. *Drymobius melanotropis*.

Drymobius melanotropis (Cope)

Dendrophidion melanotropis Cope, 1875:134. Type-locality, "Costa Rica." Holotype, U. S. Natl. Mus. 32597, adult male, collected by W. M. Gabb, date of collection unknown (examined by author).

Elaphis melanotropis: Cope, 1887:71.

Coluber (?) *melanotropis*: Boulenger, 1894:33.

Drymobius dendrophis: Amaral, 1930:13.

• CONTENT. *Drymobius melanotropis* is monotypic.

• DEFINITION. A species of *Drymobius* with a green dorsal coloration, black pigment on keels of median three dorsal rows, and 91 to 94 subcaudals.

• DESCRIPTIONS. This poorly-known species was reviewed by Wilson (1970), who summarized data derived from a study of four specimens. Gaige, Hartweg, and Stuart (1937) provided scale counts on a single specimen from Nicaragua. Taylor (1951) apparently provided only a summary of data from previous publications, but later (1954) reported on an additional specimen from Costa Rica.

• ILLUSTRATIONS. *Drymobius melanotropis* has not been illustrated.

• DISTRIBUTION. The species *Drymobius melanotropis* occurs in tropical lowland rainforest along the Atlantic versant from west-central Nicaragua south to southeastern Costa Rica.

• FOSSIL RECORD. None.



MAP. Circles indicate localities of capture. The type-locality ("Costa Rica") is too indefinite to be plotted.

• PERTINENT LITERATURE. Very little has been written on this species. Wilson (1970) summarized available information on the taxonomy of *D. melanotropis* and substantiated the distinction of this species from *D. chloroticus*. Stuart (1933) removed *D. melanotropis* from the synonymy of *Dendrophidion dendrophis* ("*Drymobius dendrophis*") wherein it had been placed by Amaral (1930).

• ETYMOLOGY. The name *melanotropis* is formed from the Greek words *melas*, meaning "black," and *tropos*, meaning "turn," in probable allusion to the dark green dorsal coloration of adults of this species.

COMMENT

Recently, I received notice from Carl S. Lieb of the collection of two additional specimens of *Drymobius melanotropis* from Costa Rica. One specimen (CRE 8443) is from Finca La Selva, Heredia Prov. and the other (CRE 8727) is from the vicinity of Poco Sol de San Carlos, Alajuela Prov. Lieb (in litt.) described the color pattern of an adult as follows: "dorsal coloration very dark green throughout, the body keels not noticeably darker than surrounding scales (although, after being pickled in formalin for about 30 days, the keels are now much darker); chin white to first ventral; burnt yellow on lateral portions of ventrals for first 1/4 of body length, becoming softer, lemon yellow on rest of ventrals; mid portions of ventrals grayish white, with yellowish tinge on first 1/2 of body, and yellowish green tinge under tail; snout reddish orange up to preoculars, becoming dark gray brown on top of head."

The other specimen is a juvenile, the color pattern of which was described by Lieb as follows: "dorsum leaf green with black interscale markings forming narrow crossbands, which are evident only when skin is stretched; other interscale spaces white, giving a black and white speckling effect on a dark green background dorsally and a lighter yellowish-green . . . laterally; middorsal keels only slightly darker than surrounding scales." Thus, the juvenile pattern is similar to that of *D. chloroticus* (Wilson, 1970).

The new localities listed above are included on the distribution map.

LITERATURE CITED

- Amaral, Afranio do. 1930. Studies of Neotropical Ophidia. XIV. Notes on two colubrine snakes. Bull. Antivenin Inst. Amer. 4:12-13.
- Boulenger, G. A. 1894. Catalogue of the snakes in the British Museum (Natural History). Vol. 2. Taylor and Francis, London. xi + 382 p., 20 pls.
- Cope, E. D. 1875. On the Batrachia and Reptilia of Costa Rica with notes on the herpetology and ichthyology of Nicaragua and Peru. J. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philadelphia ser. 2, 8:93-154.
- 1887. Catalogue of batrachians and reptiles of Central America and Mexico. Bull. U. S. Natl. Mus. (32):1-96.
- Gaige, Helen T., Norman Hartweg, and L. C. Stuart. 1937. Notes on a collection of amphibians and reptiles from eastern Nicaragua. Occ. Pap. Mus. Zool., Univ. Michigan (357):1-18.
- Stuart, L. C. 1933. Studies on Neotropical Colubrinae. III. The taxonomic status of certain Neotropical racers. Copeia 1933(1):9-10.
- Taylor, Edward H. 1951. A brief review of the snakes of Costa Rica. Univ. Kansas Sci. Bull. 34:3-187.
- 1954. Further studies on the serpents of Costa Rica. Univ. Kansas Sci. Bull. 36:673-800.
- Wilson, Larry David. 1970. A review of the *chloroticus* group of the colubrid snake genus *Drymobius*, with notes on a twin-striped form of *D. chloroticus* (Cope) from southern Mexico. J. Herp. 4(3-4):155-163.

L. D. WILSON, MIAMI-DADE JUNIOR COLLEGE, MIAMI, FLORIDA 33156.

Primary editor for this account, Richard G. Zweifel.

Published October 22, 1975 by the SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES.